

## **Waldo Canyon Fire Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) UPDATE: July 17, 2012**



**Contact: Cathleen Thompson, BAER Information Officer (707-853-4243)**

- The Waldo Canyon Fire (<http://www.incweb.org/incident/2929/>) burned within five major watersheds on the Pike National Forest: Headwater Fountain Creek, Cascade Creek-Fountain Creek, Garden of the Gods, West Monument Creek, and Lower Monument Creek watersheds.
- Of the total 18,247 acres burned by the Waldo Canyon Fire, 14,422 acres were national forest land, 3,678 acres were private land, and 147 acres were Department of Defense land.
- On Monday July 16, the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) assessment team provided its findings to the Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands (PSICC) Forest Supervisor and city, county decision makers, emergency responding authorities, and other state and federal partners.
- The BAER Team's detailed technical analysis was completed in consultation with interagency cooperating agencies and shared with those agencies to facilitate treatment implementation on non-federal lands.
- The BAER assessment team evaluated soil burn severity and slope topography to identify opportunities for hillslope treatment to reduce the likelihood of erosion, sedimentation and flash flooding for the Waldo Canyon Fire.
- The BAER team determined the three levels of burn severity of the Waldo Canyon Fire on the soils and watersheds to be: 41% low/unburned severity (7,586 acres); 40% moderate severity (7,286 acres); and 19% high severity (3,375 acres).
- On the areas with moderate to high soil burn severity, they found that mulch treatments may be effective; however, hillslopes with greater than 60% were considered too steep for emergency treatments to be effective.
- The BAER Team also presented its updated Soil Burn Severity (SBS) map ([https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/ftp/InciWeb/COPSF/2012-06-23-16:51-waldo-canyon-fire/related\\_files/ftp-20120716-204225.pdf](https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/ftp/InciWeb/COPSF/2012-06-23-16:51-waldo-canyon-fire/related_files/ftp-20120716-204225.pdf)) that also displayed the five major watersheds that were burned within the Waldo Canyon Fire.
- The Forest Supervisor will review and forward the plan to the Forest Service Regional and Washington Offices for review and approval of the recommended funding for BAER emergency stabilization treatments of burned watersheds on National Forest System lands.
- Regional and Washington Office review and approval of funding for the emergency stabilization treatments is expected within 7-to-10 days.
- Once the funding is approved, the PSICC will deploy a BAER implementation team to install and implement the prescribed treatments.
- The BAER implementation team will coordinate their emergency stabilization treatments with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Colorado Department of Transportation, El Paso County, and the City of Colorado Springs along with other state and local agencies responsible for flood control and assistance to landowners downstream of burned area federal lands ([http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/news/pas/2012\\_Fires/2012\\_Fires.html](http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/news/pas/2012_Fires/2012_Fires.html)).
- NRCS is also working cooperatively with the El Paso County Department of Public Works (DPW) and cities and communities adjacent to and downstream from the Waldo Canyon Fire burned area to evaluate potential threats to specific businesses, homes, and neighborhoods.
- Federal assistance to private landowners is the primary responsibility of the NRCS through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program ([http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/news/pas/2012\\_Fires/2012\\_Fires\\_EWP\\_Assistance.html](http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/news/pas/2012_Fires/2012_Fires_EWP_Assistance.html)).